

MEDIA RELEASE

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NATURAL HEALTH PRODUCTS INDUSTRY 2023 AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Natural Health Products NZ has announced the winners of its annual industry awards, including the Supreme Award for the best overall entry:

SUPREME AWARD	WINNER: Absolute Essential
MARKETING AWARD	WINNER: Anagenix HIGHLY COMMENDED: Vitaco Health (NZ) Ltd
CAWTHRON INSTITUTE INNOVATION AWARD	WINNER: Quantec HIGHLY COMMENDED: MitoQ
THE NEW ZEALAND FERNMARK LICENCE PROGRAMME GROWTH AWARD	WINNER (LARGE CATEGORY): Alaron Products NZ WINNER (MEDIUM CATEGORY): Anagenix
CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY	WINNER: Absolute Essential HIGHLY COMMENDED: HealthPost

Natural Health Products New Zealand is the industry body for Aotearoa New Zealand's natural health and complementary products sector, representing the industry's interests locally and abroad.

Awards Head Judge Peter Lehrke, Natural Health Products NZ Director, says the high standard of entries resulted in some very tight battles for winners: "It was a great 'problem' to have and indicates the world class achievements across the industry and the skill levels and drive for excellence in the natural health products sector."

Award winner overviews

SUPREME AWARD: ABSOLUTE ESSENTIAL

Absolute Essential was founded in 1988 by Natural Health Practitioner, Dr Bo Hendgen with a pledge to source and protect the world's finest natural plant extracts for maximum therapeutic value. The founding vision to make a positive and permanent difference to people's lives still drives the company's ethos to this day.

Absolute Essential's commitment to communities, suppliers, product quality and the company's absolute dedication to sustainability inspired judges to confer it as this year's Supreme Award winner.

Having won a category where there were so many excellent initiatives and commitment from the industry, judges felt Absolute Essential was the stand out overall winner.

“Absolute Essential lives, eats and breathes its responsibilities, and has an impact well beyond Aotearoa New Zealand.”

MARKETING AWARD: WINNER - ANAGENIX

HIGHLY COMMENDED - VITACO HEALTH (NZ) LTD

This award recognises a company that has achieved exceptional results from the implementation of an outstanding marketing campaign.

WINNER - ANAGENIX

Anagenix is a global ingredient supplier for functional food, supplement and nutraceutical producers covering Asia, Europe, UK and USA. Its products are based on New Zealand-grown plant bioactives that are proven effective by robust scientific studies.

Its Actazin® product, which is made from non-GMO New Zealand Hayward kiwifruit, offers a new strategy for improving bowel regularity.

Adding Actazin to protein powder formulations addresses an existing and wide-spread issue with protein powder consumption and allows the powder brands to differentiate from competition with a value-added positioning. This dynamic differentiation takes place in the form of a premium offering and an expansion of the target consumer base to include a female audience.

The judges recognised Anagenix’s superb job of taking a primary product and wrapping research and insights around it to create a high value export from NZ. They also noted the significant opportunity Anagenix had created and leveraged by opening up a new, sizable market segment.

HIGHLY COMMENDED – VITACO HEALTH (NZ) LTD

Vitaco Health Ltd began as a company in 2007 as a merger of two Australasian health and wellness companies: Nutra-Life Health & Fitness (a leading supplement and sports nutrition manufacturer) and Healtheries of New Zealand (one of New Zealand’s most trusted brands and largest and oldest health food and supplement manufacturers).

Judges were impressed with how Healtheries marketed and communicated its sustainable packaging switch to recyclable bottles made from plants. They acknowledged the challenge for brands that are doing the right thing to communicate this in a way that isn’t perceived as greenwashing. They also recognised the importance that Vitaco’s sustainable packaging project placed on internal communications.

CAWTHRON INSTITUTE INNOVATION AWARD:

WINNER - QUANTEC

HIGHLY COMMENDED - MITOQ

This award recognises outstanding innovation demonstrated in any facet of the entrant’s business.

WINNER - QUANTEC

Quantec specialises in extracting bioactive whey proteins from milk and creating ingredient solutions to support immunity and digestive health for consumers around the world. The unique patented combination of milk bioactives delivered by Quantec's ingredients provides enhanced functional benefits.

Quantec's main product and intellectual property portfolios are built around its proprietary bioactive whey protein fraction known as IDP®. The company needed a key point of differentiation from lactoferrin in order to have a sustainable sales proposition and to have an independent quality mark that could inform consumers about the finished products' strength and quality. To address these issues, Quantec developed a world-first activity index for bioactive whey proteins called EQI® (pronounced 'ee chee').

The test method has been patented and licensed to laboratories in New Zealand and China and is now forming the basis for a new testing standard for bioactive whey proteins.

The Judges saw this as a bold innovation, backed by patents, with early successes and lofty goals. The entry demonstrated a thorough approach to innovation, with clear objectives, defined success/failure points and the ability to pivot based on learnings.

HIGHLY COMMENDED - MITOQ

MitoQ created a pioneering antioxidant that is supported by decades of global scientific research.

Its marketing leveraged AI, first party customer data, educational journey mapping, customer insights and subscription upgrades to provide an innovative customer engagement solution. This innovation improved return on ad spend, increased subscriptions, increased customer retention and increased revenue.

The Judges were impressed by the significant success measures in this innovative marketing solution and the market leading adoption of these tools.

THE FERNMARK LICENCE PROGRAMME GROWTH AWARD:

WINNER (LARGE CATEGORY) - ALARON PRODUCTS NZ

WINNER (MEDIUM CATEGORY) - ANAGENIX

This award is made to the company with the highest percentage increase in total revenue.

WINNER (LARGE BUSINESS CATEGORY) – ALARON PRODUCTS NZ

Nelson-based Alaron Products NZ is a GMP certified contract manufacturer that was established in 1993.

Over the last 30 years Alaron has maintained a consistent pattern of business growth, with the growth over the past four years being the most significant. This change has resulted in a need to substantially increase production capacity and systems, and to invest in its growing workforce.

Alaron's growth has recently been recognised with several business awards - The Nelson Tasman 2021 Supreme Business Award and the Deloitte Fast 50 2022 Supreme Growth Award.

Its revenue increased by 65% year on year.

WINNER (MEDIUM BUSINESS CATEGORY) - ANAGENIX

Anagenix is a NZ-based ingredients company operating in the functional food and nutraceutical space who works closely with local growers, manufacturers/suppliers, and research institutes to bring the best of NZ's horticulture and science to the world. Its manufacturing facility in Auckland is operating at capacity with expansion from 14 to 20 staff in the past year.

Anagenix's revenue increased by 32% year on year.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AWARD:

WINNER - ABSOLUTE ESSENTIAL

HIGHLY COMMENDED - HEALTHPOST

This award recognises a company that has demonstrated all round Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Criteria include: contribution to employment, equal opportunities, fair or living wages, health, safety, wellness and education initiatives. Also included are contribution to local communities by philanthropy, donations or volunteering, environmental sustainability, ethical behaviour (fair trade, human rights), responsible marketing, and media recognised leadership and inspiration in CSR.

WINNER - ABSOLUTE ESSENTIAL

For 34 years, Absolute Essential has steadily implemented projects every year from its sustainability plan to create a truly clean and conscious business selling products to make a difference. Sometimes this involves making choices despite the balance sheet.

Projects range from small local initiatives at the company's operations site in Muriwai, to working in-country with overseas growers and producers, ensuring the best ethical and environmentally sustainable practices.

Priorities are mapped against UN Sustainable Development Goals, thus creating recognised benchmarks and demonstrating the power of measuring and continuous improvement.

Judges commented on the comprehensive work Absolute Essential has achieved in every facet of CSR and its documentation in the company's 2022 Sustainability Report. Absolute Essential has a very strong consistent ethos, embodying what it means to be a truly sustainable business.

HIGHLY COMMENDED - HEALTHPOST

HealthPost is an online retail business that provides New Zealand's largest range of natural health, clean beauty, healthy food & drink, and eco living products.

Its entry showed Corporate Social Responsibility leadership with enormous impact for the natural health products sector, their customers and their local community. Examples include responsible product sourcing, supporting biodiversity restoration in Aotearoa New Zealand, and being a certified B Corp, Living Wage employer and Zero Carbon certified.

Judges were impressed with the inspirational and aspirational impact that HealthPost has on its stakeholders and the flow on effect from its extraordinary commitment to people, place and planet.